

Test for Lead

Should you have your child tested for lead poisoning? Use this checklist to find out. If you answer yes to any item on the list, contact your family doctor or local health department. A simple blood test can determine if your child has been exposed to too much lead.

- ☐ My child lives in or regularly visits a home built before 1960 that:
 - ☐ has peeling or chipping paint
 - ☐ is now being remodeled
 - ☐ was recently remodeled
- ☐ Someone who lives in my home works at:
 - ☐ remodeling older homes
 - ☐ refinishing furniture
 - ☐ a battery factory or recycling plant
 - ☐ a metal products factory (lead or brass)
 - ☐ a lead mining or smelting operation
 - ☐ a chemical factory
 - ☐ a radiator repair shop
 - ☐ an indoor firing range
 - ☐ bridge painting
- ☐ Someone does one of these activities in my home:
 - ☐ constructing stained glass
 - ☐ painting pottery with lead glazes
 - ☐ making fishing weights
 - ☐ reloading ammunition
 - ☐ soldering with lead solder
- ☐ My child has licked, chewed or mouthed old painted surfaces, old vinyl mini-blinds or metal jewelry.
- ☐ My child has been given the traditional remedies azarcon, greta, paylooah or kohl.
- ☐ My child has a brother, sister or playmate with lead poisoning.

Did You Know. . .?

Small amounts of lead can poison. Most lead enters the body through the mouth. Because young children put toys and fingers into their mouths, they are more likely to swallow lead or lead dust. Even very small amounts of lead may cause learning, behavioral or mental problems in children. Often the effects are so small you may not notice them. Most children with lead poisoning seem healthy.

For More Information

Washington State Department of Health
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
PO Box 47812, Olympia, WA 98504-7812
1-800-909-9898

Contact your local health department:

Visit these web sites:

www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/Epidemiology/NICE/Lead/default.htm
www.epa.gov/lead/
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/leadpoisoning.html
www.metrokc.gov/health/tsp/lead.htm

If you have been exposed to lead at work contact:
Washington State Department of Labor & Industries
1-800-423-7233



For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-909-9898 (TDD/TTY 1-800-833-6388).

Child/window photo courtesy of Oregon Department of Human Services.

Lead & your Kids



Learn How to Protect Your Child from Lead Poisoning

Lead Can Poison



Protect Young Children

- ✧ Keep your children away from paint chips and lead dust.
- ✧ Have children play in grassy or paved areas, not in dirt, especially within three feet of your home's foundation.
- ✧ Wash children's faces and hands thoroughly and often. Do this after they have played outside and before they eat. Remember to clean under fingernails, too.
- ✧ Wash infant toys and teething rings often.
- ✧ Avoid using azarcon, greta, paylooah and kohl. These traditional remedies contain lead and will make children very sick.
- ✧ Never let young children put metal jewelry or metal keys in their mouths.
- ✧ Feed your children lots of foods high in calcium and iron. The body is less likely to absorb lead if it has enough calcium and iron. Foods high in calcium are cheese, milk, yogurt, tofu, and orange juice with calcium. Foods high in iron are meat, cooked dried beans or peas, or cereal with iron.

Reduce Exposure to Lead

in and around your home

Old Paint

Paint in older homes is the biggest source of lead exposure for children. Before 1960, paint often contained high levels of lead. This old paint can chip, peel or flake. Old painted doors, windows or stairs can make lead dust. Outside, lead in paint chips can contaminate the dirt where children play.

Remodeling and Removing Paint

- ✧ Children can be poisoned by lead when living in an older home that is being remodeled. Contact your local health department for guidelines on removing lead paint before remodeling.
- ✧ It is safest to hire a certified contractor to remove lead paint in the home.
- ✧ Children and pregnant women should not stay in an older home that is being remodeled.
- ✧ Keep all painted surfaces inside and outside the home in good condition.

Soil and Dust

Soil can be contaminated from lead that builds up over many years. Near busy roads, there may be lead in soil from cars that used leaded gasoline. In farming areas, soil may contain lead from pesticides. Smoke and dust from lead smelters, steel mills and other industries may also add lead to the soil.

Cleaning House and Keeping Dirt Out

- ✧ Put mats at each door and clean them often. Wipe shoes before coming inside. It is best to leave shoes at the door.
- ✧ Use a damp cloth or mop for dusting and mopping all painted surfaces and floors. Clean them at least once a week.
- ✧ Vacuum and shampoo carpets often. It is best to use a vacuum with a HEPA filter. This reduces the amount of dust released into the air.
- ✧ Wash your hands after cleaning and dusting or working outside.

Household Water

Household water can be contaminated with lead from solder, brass fixtures and lead pipes used in plumbing. Your tap water may pick up high amounts of lead if it sits for a long time in the pipes. Hot tap water or water that is naturally soft or acidic may also pick up lead. Boiling the water will not remove the lead.

Preparing Food and Drink

- ✧ Use cold tap water for cooking, drinking and making baby formula. If the faucet hasn't been used in a few hours, run the water for a minute to get cleaner water.
- ✧ Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before eating to remove soil and dust.
- ✧ Avoid using glazed pottery and leaded glass crystal for heating, serving or storing foods.
- ✧ Don't store canned foods in the opened can. Store foods and juices in glass or plastic containers.

Work and Hobbies

If you work at a job that uses lead, you may bring lead dust home on your work clothes. This dust can contaminate your car and your home, and expose your family to dangerous amounts of lead. Some hobbies may also release lead dust or fumes into the air. Children can be exposed to lead if they are near these activities.

Avoiding Lead and Lead Dust

- ✧ If you work around lead, don't wear work clothes and shoes home. Shower before you come home. Keep work clothes separate from the family laundry.
- ✧ Keep kids away from activities where lead is used. This includes making fishing weights, reloading ammunition, soldering and refinishing furniture.
- ✧ Don't use old vinyl mini-blinds in a home with young children. The blinds may contain lead which can be released as lead dust.



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Sincerely,
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